

CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALIST

"EVERY PLANT WHICH MY HEAVENLY FATHER HATH NOT PLANTED SHALL BE ROOTED UP."

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[From Buchanan's Journal of Man.]

MENDING THE WORLD.

The world is full of reformers. Reform springs from discontent. They who do not fare well in the world, necessarily desire some change of arrangement for their own comfort. A considerable portion of reformatory impulse, therefore, arises from dissatisfaction and restlessness. Yet, at the same time that the dissatisfied demands a change for his own personal benefit, he will be apt to look about for the co-operation of others who may also desire a change, and extend his sympathies to other wrongs than his own. It is by no means certain that the Spirit of reform is always philanthropic, for the philanthropy and justice of the movement may be a secondary consideration. The same sect which struggles for toleration when in the minority, will often indulge in intolerant persecution as soon as it has obtained political power.

In this business of mending the world, they who fare prosperously as the world is going on at present, are not very apt to desire any change, since they have little personal occasion for discontent. Reform, therefore, is never the fashion in the higher classes of society. The wealthy, powerful and learned, and they who belong to the higher classes by birth or association, are generally the opponents of reforms, while the poor, the unfortunate, the obscure, the half educated, the oppressed and despised classes, all have so strong a personal interest in reform, that thousands are ready to listen to the suggestions of the reformer. It is a necessary result, therefore, that conservatism be fashionable, respectable, and influential, while reform is unfashionable, humble in its origin, unpolished in its manners, vehement in its language, and perpetually engaged in a struggle with the leading influence of society.

In view of these facts, he who feels impelled by philanthropic motives, to become a reformer, can but expect to lose his influence with the more important classes of society, and cut himself off from the broad avenues of ambition. He must be content to take an humble position, and find in his own internal sentiments, a compensation for the loss of his external advantages. He must expect, also, to be thrown into associations less pleasant and attractive than those which belong to conservatism. Instead of the courtesy, refinement and cheerfulness, which belong to the prosperous who have enjoyed all the advantages of life, he must expect discontent, impatience, jealousy, and fault-finding, for as the whole movement of reform is a matter of discontent and criticism, reformers are necessarily critical, captious, and liable to internal dissensions. Many a liberal Spirit that would have been drawn into the ranks of reform, have been repelled by the captious strife, the personal jealousy, and censoriousness prevailing among reformers.

These are deplorable evils, but according to the ordinary laws and operations of human nature, they cannot well be avoided. It is true there are occasionally slight reforms, which even the most conservative may approve, and which call forth none of that deep discontent and censorious denunciation which belong to the discussion of greater evils. The slight reforms which do not excite the denunciation and persecution of the higher classes may be prosecuted without the fiery indignation and Spirit of contention which are aroused among those who are persecuted. But all great reforms, which disturb the existing condition of society, the rights of different classes, or the doctrines of the leading profession, are necessarily accompanied by all the fierceness of moral warfare.

If this be the inevitable tendency of the laws of human nature, what lesson does it teach us? Does it not teach that reformers should especially beware of indulging too much the Spirit of indignant denunciation, and censure, which their position naturally excites? Does it not teach that we should endeavor to look upon the world, not merely to find faults in men, but to recognize at the same time the good that is in them, in order that those whom we denounce and criticize, should feel that we are not unjust, nor void of human kindness?—Does it not teach that we should cherish a Spirit of hopefulness, to counteract the natural discontent of our position, and a Spirit of kindly mutual appreciation, in order to prevent our jealous criticism from operating too severely upon each other, and introducing into our own camp a degree of discord fatal to our success.

It is wisely ordained that they who cultivate too discordant a Spirit, shall be incapable of co-operation, and, therefore, shall be deprived of their moral influence. Hence a reform prosecuted in a jealous and censorious manner, necessarily results in failure, as it should. And just in proportion as the jealous and censorious Spirit is introduced, the power of reform is weakened and paralyzed.

When reform arises from pure philanthropy, its Spirit is genial and comprehensive; it seeks not to destroy anything that is worthy, but to preserve all that is good. It engages in no mad ultraism,

nor does it become the blind devotee of any single idea. With eclectic comprehensiveness, it embraces and cherishes all that is worthy of preservation, and makes no indiscriminate war upon parties, and their doctrines.

Perhaps the most important lesson to be drawn from the philosophy of reform, is that which relates to reformers themselves. They who would reform the world, and they who would mend themselves, are often sadly mistaken as to the true sources of the evils of which they complain. The majority of mankind, when they find serious evils accompanying their course of life, become indignant against the circumstances by which these evils are produced, and direct their attention to the outer world, instead of looking internally, to discover whether the source of evil is not in themselves. So common is this that a multitude of examples at once rise before the minds of those who excrete society, and denounce human nature, and the laws of the universe, because their own policy and course in life have been unsuccessful. There is not a greater delusion, nor a more universal source of human misery, than this very error of ascribing our misfortunes to external agencies instead of ourselves. Yet who among our moralists and divines are earnestly engaged in correcting this lamentable error, or give it more than a passing notice?

A few familiar examples will illustrate its prevalence. Young men and women set forth in life, with an education designed rather to gratify vanity than to serve the great ends of life. One is familiar with the dead languages, and another well supplied with light literature, music, and the accomplishments which ornament the parlor. They know almost nothing of the laws of nature, nothing of the laws of health, nothing of the constitution of their own bodies, nothing of the philosophy of their own minds, nothing of the principles of mental culture, and little of the practical, pecuniary, and industrial duties of life. Thus in the outset they have disregarded all the great laws or admonitions of nature, and the day of punishment is surely approaching, from which there can be no escape. From their profound ignorance of the principles of human nature, each contracts an unfortunate alliance, and the remainder of their lives is embittered by discontent and blighted affections. How seldom do they ever reflect that the fault lay in themselves. They complain of their fate, but do not complain of their own blindness and profligate disregard of the moral law. Hence they do not think of correcting the same evil in their offspring, by directing their attention to the science of man. Thus misery, crime and discord, are perpetuated, while the unfortunate victims blame their destiny, or denounce each other and the whole world, instead of denouncing their own folly.

The loss of domestic happiness is only a small portion of their sufferings. Ignorant of the laws of health, they blindly encounter diseases, which the study of their own constitutions would enable them to avoid. *He* suffers from dyspepsia, fevers, and inflammations, which cut short his life, and deprive him of half the energy of his constitution; while *she* falls a victim to neuralgia, headache, female disorders, and consumption, or a gradual failure of vitality, all the time regarding herself as terribly afflicted by divine providence, or by the agency of the devil, never dreaming that she is herself the sole cause of her own misery, and that she might be at any time relieved, by conforming to the laws of health.

Poverty, too, is among their afflictions; for neither has ever studied the moral principles which should govern the management of pecuniary affairs, and each lives with reference to fashion, and a false idea of respectability, sometimes spending their entire income, and sometimes running into debt, until, as old age, impaired health, and family responsibilities accumulate, they can only grumble at their bad fortune, and abuse their more opulent neighbors, instead of censuring themselves for their profligate disregard of the rigid economy which was necessary at their outset in life. Their children, too, are reared to consider it their leading object to keep an elegant external appearance, without regard to ultimate poverty and suffering. Thus the race of grumbling unfortunates is perpetuated. The constant pressure of misfortunes and annoyances, produced by their own imprudence, at length brings on an intense irritability of temper, which renders them unfit for social intercourse.

Young men and women with this peculiarity are seldom guarded against its effects. Their captious remarks, and offensive manners, soon make them enemies, and all their ill temper is reciprocated with four fold increase. They find themselves badly treated, if not decidedly persecuted, and this encourages them the more against society. Their opinion of human nature grows worse and worse, from their own experience; their deportment becomes more harsh and unpleasant, they live in continual warfare with society, and as they never look to themselves for the causes, they denounce mankind, and the very principles of human nature, and become firm believers in the doctrine of total depravity.

How easily might such individuals have been saved from their moral ruin, could they have turned their thoughts inward after their first conviction, and discovered that there was too much harshness in their own nature, and that a little personal reform would enable them to live in harmony with mankind.

The laws of the universe are stern, inflexible and just, and whether we are satisfied with but to obey their admonitions, or pay their penalties.—These laws, which operate upon all alike, indicate

very plainly certain courses of action, which lead to health, to happiness, and to success. Others have obeyed these laws and succeeded in accomplishing all their objects—happiness, wealth, power and wisdom have been theirs. If we, living under the same laws, and possessing the same human faculties, cannot likewise attain satisfactory results, the fault lies in ourselves. It is but blind and brutal folly to rail against the laws of the universe, or the principles of human nature—to refer to the wrath of God or the power of the Devil, in explanation of our own miserable failures to accomplish what other men have accomplished, who lived under the same fixed laws, and exercised the same powers which we possess.

The principle should be impressed upon the mind of every young man and woman, that *failure or success, in any of the desirable objects of life, is a matter which belongs entirely to ourselves*;—that in proportion as we fail, we should study more diligently the causes of our failure, not in the faults of the world or society, but in the faults of our own mismanagement.

Success is the just and inevitable reward of power rightly applied. He who fails to win success, either had not the power or did not rightly apply it. He who does not rightly apply his power, has neglected the proper use of his intellect, which would have taught him the proper application. And he who has not the power necessary to win success, has neglected to exercise those organic energies which every human being possesses, and which all may cultivate.

When you have failed, the fault may not be entirely your own, as an individual, but you represent your ancestors—you take their places—their virtues, powers, rewards and punishments, as they were left by your predecessors. In speaking of your responsibilities, I speak of you as the representatives not only of yourself, but also of the sum-total of your ancestors. But there are few, indeed, so utterly bankrupt by their ancestors, as to be incapable of putting forth that energy which is necessary to success in all the important ends of life;—health, happiness and intellectual growth. They are all within your reach. If you fail, the fault lies in yourself, and you should look to self alone for the cause.

Every twinge of pain, every hour of melancholy, every personal inconvenience and punishment which you experience, you should regard as a punishment inflicted upon you by the inflexible laws of nature, to compel you to fulfill those duties which you had neglected—to compel you to resume the work of physical, mental, and moral development, until you are lifted above the evils which now surround you.

But (says an argumentative apologist who dislikes the work of self-correction,) my misfortunes do not originate with myself—the community around me will not appreciate my merits—I have been aiming all my life at moral and intellectual improvement—I know that I am vastly superior to those around me, but this superiority in knowledge and truthfulness of opinions only excites their jealousy and opposition. I am crushed by the discordant influences around me, and I cannot do better than I have done.

Indeed, sir, yours is a most plausible story, and excites my sympathies, but you furnish no exception to the law. Your knowledge, wisdom, and goodness, have all repaid you with a great amount of happiness; and even your enemies have an impression of your goodness which wins their respect. But you have failed of success in your relations to society, and why? Not because success was impossible, for others have succeeded under more unfavorable circumstances, and triumphed under greater difficulties; but because you have not the energy to command success. You want more power. Your career, and that of your ancestry, have been too inefficient. You want more physical and moral power. Were you a great man, the puny beings around you would be overawed, and the leaders of society would take sides with you.—You would be enabled to mould the community to your own purpose—to win their friendship and command their respect. But as it is, they do not feel your force; and you must struggle on for self-development, until they look up to you with reverence. Bring forth all your latent powers; assume the responsibilities of difficult enterprises; keep your brain and your muscles in incessant motion; shrink from nothing that is necessary to accomplish your purpose, and you will surely rise to a commanding position, from which your children and their descendants may go on to the very summit of society. Thus your moral and intellectual excellence will be a blessing to mankind.

But, says another modest apologist, I delight in the pursuit of science, and care nothing for money; and when I would bring forth the profound truths which I have acquired, I find that a poor, and shabbily dressed man, like myself, has too little influence in the community, and I am unable to bring forth my discoveries for the benefit of mankind, and to gain the credit to which I am entitled; scientific demagogues, who practice humbug and claptrap, and live in splendid style among the wealthy and fashionable, are always successful, without receiving the reproof to which their merits entitle them. I think I have a right to complain.

No sir, you have not. You need not complain and abuse society for its love of wealth. It is you who are wrong; the fault lies in yourself; and you should seriously set about self-reformation.—How do you gain this superior scientific knowledge? Is it not by cultivating and perverting still further an unbalanced brain? Your pale face, your feeble gait, your lifeless manner, and your unconcerned poverty, all show that, while cultivat-

ing the intellect, you have paralyzed the occipital region of your brain, and lost a great amount of your physical energy. You have not only impaired your physical constitution, but have impaired that self-respect, and that honorable ambition to acquire the means of subsistence, which are necessary to every human being.—In the plan of Nature every individual must take care of himself. We cannot all be paupers. Let every one take good care of himself, and all will be prosperous, no one becoming a burden to his fellows. What pains have you taken to provide for your wants now and hereafter, when sickness or old age may overtake you? Have you ever thought of your pecuniary duties? Have you ever reflected that your duties to yourself are just as imperative as your duties to mankind? No! you reply—a generous mind is above selfish considerations, and you cannot bring yourself to care for the accumulation of money. Very well, if you do not care to be independent and comfortable, the fault is your own, and you know the consequences. Change your policy. Attend first to your physical constitution, and the means of existence. Then cultivate science without making yourself a martyr, and society will respect you, because you will become a more efficient, independent and respectable man.

But here comes another, protesting against the sternness of our rule, whose plea it is still more difficult to resist. I do not think, she exclaims, that my misfortunes are my own fault, or can be regarded as a just punishment. I was married early and inexperienced—my health became impaired—my husband became intemperate—and now, as a poor widow, I am toiling to support my family, leading a life of hardship, compared to which slavery would be a blessing.

Your case is indeed a hard one; but wherever there is suffering there must have been error as its cause. Why do women toil in abject poverty, when men by an equal amount of toil obtain a comfortable independence? Is it not because they pursue a different course from that pursued by men? because they have not fully cultivated their self-respect? because from a superstitious weakness, they think it necessary for them to confine themselves in a narrow and humble circle of existence, in which they cannot possibly develop their powers, or secure an adequate return for their labor? It may not be that every individual woman is guilty of this folly, but there have heretofore been but few exceptions. Perhaps even you who grieve over your hard lot would be the first to sneer at women who endeavor honorably to enlarge the sphere of their pursuits. But if you are not one of that class—if you heartily scorn the custom which has confined woman to the humblest and least lucrative labors, then show your energy like a man, and seek those pursuits in which you may attain comfort and independence.

If you married too early, or found your husband intemperate, you but confess your own folly in these acts; and yet, even these follies would not always depress you, if you had in the outset properly stored your own mind, strengthened your own character, and not attempted to exist as a mere parasite, resting upon another being, and void of independent resources for happiness and self-support.

Here comes another complainant, who does not appear to be seriously disturbed by his misfortunes, but appears to impart instruction or defend his course. I cannot, says he, approve of your doctrine that our misfortunes arise from ourselves; for all my misfortunes in life have arisen from others, and entirely from their ingratitude. If I had treated them badly, I should not complain, but since I have been abandoned and injured, by some of my best friends, or rather by those to whom I had been a most faithful friend, I must contend that the fault was not my own. The ingratitude of those whom we benefit, is a matter of which we have a right to complain, and for which we cannot blame ourselves.

Here, I beg leave to differ. The gratitude of our friends depends upon our deportment. We may cherish that sentiment by the kindness of our conduct, or we may destroy it by our insolence and exorbitant demands. If your conduct has been entirely kind and generous, it is scarcely possible that you should lose the regard of your beneficiaries. But, in any case, you should not complain. If you performed acts of kindness solely for the sake of receiving an equivalent in the shape of gratitude, you cannot boast of your motives, nor have you any right to complain if you were not sufficiently sagacious in making your bargain to secure your pay. But the truth is, you should not have attempted to perform a generous act from any other motive than the sense of duty, and the pleasure which your kindness in itself affords. If, in addition to the natural reward of kind deeds, you expect a more profitable return, make sure of a good bargain before you attempt the exchange, and do not complain if you are not shrewd enough to secure it.

Another complainant now comes forward, who appears conscious of the justness of her cause, and the world-wide sympathy which it demands. A drooping female, wearing the emblems of grief, approaches, and calmly relates her misfortunes, with a positive conviction that she must be exempted from the operation of our law. I cannot, she says, acknowledge the justness of your rule, which condemns the unhappy to bear their misfortunes as faults. I have endeavored not to neglect my duty in life; and although I have been afflicted by divine providence, I am sure that my afflictions were not sent as a punishment for any unusual offense. My whole life has been embittered by grief—grief for the loss of my nearest and dear-

est friends. I have devoted my life to the service of my family, and the misfortunes and deaths which have overtaken them have inflicted ten times the pangs of death upon myself. Early in life my parents were snatched away from me by the hand of death, and before my lacerated heart had recovered from this misfortune, my brothers and sisters one after another were taken from me, so that, for a long series of years, I have known nothing but the dark drapery of mourning, and the gloom and desolation of death. Worn down by a series of repeated and apparently unending sorrows, I gave all my affections with the most devoted reliance, to the sympathizing bosom of my husband. But even he too was taken from me, and then—cruel pang of all—the last links that bound me to earth, my beloved children, have all been snatched from my arms, and consigned to the cold grave.—Could you be so cruel as to thrust your stern philosophy upon me in the depth of my affliction, and heap censures upon me, in addition to the terrible calamities which have overtaken me?

Your case indeed is one that calls forth our sympathies. But the law of nature and the dictates of truth never bend or vary on account of human misfortunes. If your friends and family have been snatched from you, before they had attained the proper limits of life, it is certain that they violated the laws of health and longevity, and paid the just and inevitable penalty. If your children have died prematurely, the fault was probably in yourself, either in giving them an imperfect constitution, or in managing erroneously the constitution that you gave them. Death was the misfortune of your family, as a consequence of their errors. In your own case this misfortune was felt heavily, on account of your own susceptibility to grief. Let me ask, then, was this terrible gloom which has overshadowed your own life, anything more than the operation of your own feelings? If but a matter of feeling in yourself, was it a proper and laudable emotion or passion? If productive of evil, it must be considered wrong, and the entire amount of mental anguish which you have endured, must be ascribed to mental infirmities, and the cultivation of erroneous sentiments. Grief is in reality but an infirmity, and like fear or melancholy, it is one that should not be encouraged. True affection does not imply the existence of violent grief. On the contrary, the best class of friends are those whose kindness and love are ever buoyant and energetic, and who never give way to depressing emotions. They who cultivate grief, gloom and melancholy, cultivate really a vice, or at least a weakness, instead of a virtue. The wretchedness of your grief, therefore, has been but the natural or inevitable punishment of an error which you have cherished. Cultivate the hopeful and lofty sentiments which constitute the highest traits of human nature, and you will no longer see in death the gloomy and terrible picture which is sketched by the superstitious imagination. On the contrary, you will regard death as a solemn and beautiful transition to another mode of existence, and instead of leaning with childish weakness upon the society of your friends, and sinking into despair when deprived of it, you will rise from their death-bed with serene emotions, and with a determination to perform still more faithfully your part in the drama of life, to prepare yourself for the same final change. Dry up, then, your tears, and remember that your afflictions are really but a self-imposed penance.

Before we have finally settled this cheerful view of human sorrows, another complainant approaches, with the benevolent purpose of rectifying our philosophical error, and proving that the laws of nature do not always operate harmoniously and justly. I am, says he, a moral reformer—I have struggled for the welfare of my fellow-beings—I have been an advocate of education and of temperance—a preacher of Christianity, and an opponent of the works of the Devil in every shape. You may imagine that I have not attained much worldly prosperity by my course, but it is not of that I would complain; for I consider trial, temptation and suffering necessary work on earth. But I do complain of this: that while I have been laboring for the good of my fellow-men, I have not enjoyed either their approbation or their patronage. On the contrary, I have found enemies and persecution, where I should have found friends and support. I have found the halls of science and the temples of religion deserted by the multitude, while they eagerly attended the race-course, the circus, the theatre and the arena of political debate. Wherever the animal nature is to be gratified, there men congregate. Wherever the sublime truths of religion and science are taught and maintained, you may be sure of a small attendance. I have rebuked and warned against this false taste, but in vain. I have found enemies and opposition where I desired to find friends; and while those who pandered to a vicious taste were honored, carressed and rewarded, the stern and humble follower of Christ, has been abandoned or persecuted.—Hence I must assert, that in the government of the universe, punishment and suffering are not the evidence of divine displeasure, and that triumphant success is not the evidence of divine approbation.

Your objections, I acknowledge, are weighty, and would to most persons appear conclusive. But we must look a little deeper into the essential nature of things, and not be deceived by mere words. Why should he be disliked who rebukes or opposes a vice? Surely the fact that he has aroused angry passions, is proof that he has not taken the proper course. Since men are not to be reformed by exciting their anger against the reform intended, he who speaks with unnecessary harshness to the offender, should not be surprised if the laws of na-

ture punish the harshness which he displays. The better elements of character rightly displayed, are always attractive and pleasant in their impression. If teachers of morals, religion and science, fail to render their instructions attractive and successful, it must be that they have failed in properly addressing the human faculties. Men delight in having their whole moral and intellectual nature aroused; and a clergyman who has sufficient energy to do this, never fails to attract large audiences, and gain their approbation. It may be that the repetition of dry theological dogmas, and abstract homilies, would prove unsuccessful or unattractive, and it is right that they should be so. That which addresses the intellect with no great power, and fails to arouse the higher emotions or the passions, is not appropriate to teach and elevate mankind.—When men abandon a public speaker, it is generally right that they should do so, and we may always find among those who attract the multitude some substantial merit, of which the success is the reward. Public speakers who fail of success, however laudable their motives, should not complain of human nature, but renew the study of their own deficiencies, and prepare by proper discipline for better success in future efforts.

Another, yet, approaches, with serious countenance, and an apparent conviction that justice is on his side. He affirms that he is a member of the regular profession—that he has diligently studied his science in the most distinguished schools, for the longest period required—graduated with honor, and endeavored in every way to uphold the dignity and honor of the profession; but that while he has pursued a high-minded course, quacks and pretenders of low degree have gained the public confidence, and left him in poverty, while men whom he despises are acquiring wealth. He says much of popular ignorance—humbug—and concludes that he has been badly treated by the sovereign people, and that his sufferings are a penalty for his virtues.

This learned and respectable gentleman forgets that devotion to the dignity and pecuniary interests of his profession is not devotion to human welfare, or to any high moral duty. The profession has justly lost the confidence of the public, because it has been too busy with its own dignity—its traditional usages and learning, to realize the true ends of the healing art. The immense mortality of cholera, consumption, fevers, and inflammations, under the treatment of learned men of the profession, has impressed the public with the conviction that medical learning is no guarantee of success in the curing of disease. When, therefore, men of but little learning, or even more destitute of character, have shrewdness enough to learn what medicines to give, or what course to pursue in the treatment of prevalent diseases, they will be employed by common-sense people, even if their successful remedy should be a secret nostrum. If their remedies are innocent, they will be preferred, since your dangerous remedies are not always used with discretion. And if the class whom you denounce are intelligent, honorable, and educated physicians, the public sympathy will necessarily be enlisted in behalf of those whom you denounce, merely because they do not adopt your own creed, or belong to your own school. You should be content to have all practitioners judged by the result of their practice; and unless you can prove that you are more successful than your competitors, your medical learning gives you no peculiar claim upon the public confidence. And if your learning is superior to that of your opponents, you are inferior to them in other important particulars. You have less energy of character, less pleasant and attractive manners, a more stiff and repulsive bearing, or a more meagre and uninteresting countenance. Hence your personal influence is less pleasant and beneficial to the sick. It is for these facts, and not for your virtues, that Nature has punished you.

Another complainant now approaches with diffident and anxious countenance. He is a student. He is embarrassed by poverty. He experiences great difficulties in the pursuit of knowledge; and though he is determined to struggle on, he repines at his fate. Let him take a more cheerful view.—If knowledge were given him amid the luxurious appliances which belong to the heirs of wealth, he might become, for all practical purposes, as worthless as they. To enable him to accomplish anything in life, it is necessary for him to discipline his character, and strengthen his purposes as well as his mind and his muscles. It is necessary that he should have difficulties to overcome, and gain strength by overcoming them. When he has done this, the strength of character which he will have acquired, will carry him on through the remainder of life. Let him regard his early toil as a species of moral gymnastics for his own permanent benefit.

An intelligent laborer now approaches, and calls our attention to the oppressed condition of the industrial classes throughout the world. Capital everywhere is supreme, and labor sells itself for a bare subsistence, and often fails to obtain that.—He mourns the ignorance and degradation of so large a portion of mankind, and condemns the injustice which dooms those who erect stately buildings, to live in hovels; and those who clothe the human race, to go in rags; while he who tills the soil, has scarcely food enough for life.

It is vain for laborers to occupy their time in idle complaints or disorderly action. If they are degraded, the fault is their own. They have the physical and moral power to elevate themselves whenever they will. Even if capital is arrayed with its power against them, let them combine in proper co-operative associations, and they will soon be independent of capital. Ignorant, passionate, intemperate and lawless men, ought not in justice

to have any permanent influence in society. It is fortunate if such are confined by necessity, to rigorous industrial occupation; it is best for themselves and society. But they who have intelligence and moral worth, who are capable of combining and acting harmoniously, in a great common cause, cannot be kept down. In any portion of the world, combined human labor, industriously applied, guided by discretion and economy, will in a few years realize comfort and independence. Even under arbitrary governments, the toiling classes may thus emancipate themselves, if they are fully worthy of emancipation; and if too many difficulties are there thrown in their way, they can find their way to the land of freedom, where nothing but selfishness, prodigality, ignorance and indolence can keep them down. Human labor produces more than twice as much as is necessary to support the laborer; industry, perseverance, and economy, guided by intelligence, cannot therefore fail to secure an ultimate independence.

The elevation of the laboring classes is in their own hands. And throughout the world let it be proclaimed to all of high and low degree, that whatever the misfortunes from which they suffer—whatever the failures and shortcomings of their lives—whatever the nature of their discontent or unhappiness, their evils arise entirely from the violation of obvious laws, and their redemption from those evils is to be obtained, if they choose, not by denouncing or warring against nature—not by calling upon divine providence for special interference, or criticizing society and calling upon mankind to change their course, but by studying and obeying the laws of the universe; and above all, by the thorough study of the science of man, which should be, to all classes—to all ages, sexes and conditions, the leading study of life—the constant monitor in misfortune, leading from all that is dark, evil, and hateful, to all that is good and glorious in life and destiny.

NOTE.—In the foregoing essay an important principle, which has been too much neglected, is set forth in a bold and unqualified manner. It cannot be denied, however, that like other general principles, it has its exceptions—yet as the object of the essay was to establish a much neglected principle, it was not deemed necessary to dwell upon exceptions, which will be readily added and ardently sustained by many.

Christian Spiritualist.

So long as Men are Honest, so long will Success follow in the Footsteps of their Labors.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 1855.

CONTROVERSIES ON SPIRITUALISM.

Among the many instrumentalities likely to be of great usefulness in the spread and development of truth, we know of none so easily productive of good or bad results as public oral controversy.—The necessities for qualification are intensified, so soon as you limit the time for disposing of the issue, since each speaker should in some degree be able to harmonize facts with their antecedents in history, philosophy and science. And should the subject matter have any bearing on religion, its claims and authority should be recognized, if the discussion is to be productive of good. All this, however, presupposes knowledge in an eminent degree with culture and such other qualification of mind and address as will enable the speaker to think clearly, and express himself exactly, that misunderstanding and misconception cannot possibly happen. Beside this, the control of the temper is of the first importance, for the moment excitement takes the place of a wise caution and conscientious reason, that moment "chaos has come again," since a mortified vanity or a humiliated self-esteem are bad counsellors where personalities are so like to be "matters of course." But above all, it is absolutely necessary that all parties be honest, seeking for truth and conviction rather than victory or self-aggrandizement. These qualifications are essentially true of all persons inclined to "argue the point," but more especially true is it of the public disputant, since ignorance, inefficiency, trickery, dishonesty or bad temper can awaken only displeasure, disgust or party antagonism in those who may be the seers and hearers of such "human events." We pen these reflections, however, more for the benefit of our private and every day issues than for the public controversies now going on, since so far as we know, there is more need of them among the former class than in the latter. Indeed the method as well as the Spirit of many of our conference discussions of late have been not only objectionable but offensive, and personal in a painful degree, so much so, that if a wiser and better tempered caution cannot enter into these councils, it were a waste of time to continue them. The world no doubt needs knowledge and information, but it need confidence in HUMAN NATURE more, and all reform will be defective so long as men reason from a suspicious stand-point.—Not a few men seem to think that superstition is the only thing to be got rid of, but there is a worse thing than that, *i. e.*, *bad faith or no faith* in the integrity and moral uprightness of human nature.—It may be the Church has been the agent of superstition, but in a more comprehensive sense, she has been the *nursery* of humanity and the essential friend of moral faith. In fact and in truth, the credulity and superstition of the religiousist springs in a great measure from the skepticism and lack of confidence characteristic of "the man of the world."

We see, therefore, that the disputant needs not only a comprehensive knowledge of history, science, philosophy and religion, but he needs *mostly* what all these properly explain, and that is a knowledge of, and a trust in, the essential goodness of human nature. This doctrine of *depravity* is not *exclusively* a dogma of the Churches, for it enters into, and fashions most of the petty gossip and villanies of the times. We hope to know, however, that the public discussions now going on in this city and in Cleveland, will do honor to human nature, whatever may become of its logic, its pride of argument, and consistency. Of the discussion now going on at the Tabernacle, we have no personal knowledge, as we have not been able to attend, and will therefore offer no opinion nor report at present. The little that the city press has said about it, gives us but poor materials for forming a judgment, so we pass to the discussion in Cleveland. The questions at issue are the following:

1st. Do Spirits of departed human beings still hold intelligent and sensible intercourse with men on earth?

2d. Can the so-called Spiritual phenomena be satisfactorily accounted for, without admitting the agency of Spirits?

3d. Are the Spiritual phenomena productive of more good than evil?

Of the disputants (Prof. Rehn and Prof. Mahan), we know little or nothing beyond such items of news as we get from "the press." They are both spoken of as gentlemen of culture and mental ability, and therefore qualified to do justice to the subject, so far as our *present* philosophy can make that possible. The following reflections from the editor of the Buffalo Republic are well worth an attentive reading.

The Spiritual Discussion at Cleveland.—This

interesting discussion which is now in the second week of its continuance, is exciting a very great degree of public attention. It is the best test of Spiritualism yet produced, and is destined to have a marked influence on the further progress of this new doctrine. All the disputants are able men, and no stone is left unturned by either party to establish or destroy their respective positions. This is what the public desire. In the books heretofore published for and against the Spiritual theory, but little has been done to *prove* the positions taken—those positions having been *assumed* in the first instance and the vital question still left open for future discussion. The reports of the Cleveland debate, as furnished by the Plain Dealer, show distinctly that there is no dodging, but that the whole question is discussed with a degree of subtlety, fairness and good temper rarely if ever equalled.

We see the report's are copyrighted, and infer that when closed, the whole will be issued in book form. This is as it should be. The public want information on this subject; add as far as our knowledge extends, we are unacquainted with any source where it can be more completely and intelligently furnished. There is nothing in our creed which would prevent us from believing in the so-called Spiritual manifestations, had we the necessary evidence to enforce the conviction; and we presume that this is the case with thousands. In this city, then, without expressing any opinion as to the merits of the present discussion, we are led to infer that it cannot fail to retard rather than advance the new doctrine, for the reason that if Spiritualism is true, the difficulty of establishing that fact, alongside of the evidence of the parallel cases of President Mahan, will be increased ten-fold—if false, the same evidence will eventually lead, and at no distant day, to a demonstration of its falsity, or, if it does not accomplish this, it will always remain as a huge stumbling block in the way of its progress.

In this connection we produce from the editorial columns of the Plain Dealer, an extract to which we invite the candid attention of candid minds:

"We are by no means qualified to discuss this matter of Spiritualism—because we have not had time and opportunity to examine it with the care, candor, and patience, which its inexpressible importance demands. But of one or two things we have become fully convinced. We are persuaded that whether true or false, the so-called phenomena of Spiritualism presents to the mind of the philosopher, the religiousist, the psychologist, and especially the Christian, one of the most sublime and awful problems for solution that the world has ever known."

"Why do we say so? Because a class of phenomena, the existence of which none but knaves and fools deny, which, it is believed by many, are not referable to any of the known laws of either the mind or matter, are forced upon our attention, and demand our consideration. Are we asleep, and do we dream? Or is it a solemn truth, that miracles, at once astonishing in their nature, and most beneficent in their character, are every day and hour being wrought, not only in our midst, but through the length and breadth of our land, if not all over the world? Every day the sick are raised from beds of languishing torture by the touch of a human hand; the lame are made to leap like the hart; voices attuned to accord with the songs of seraph and seraphim are heard speaking to the children of men; ponderous bodies are moved by invisible and unknown powers; and tongues unvoided to eloquence are moved to speak, as men have never before spoken. Is this denied? No! The self-constituted champions of obsolete ideas—the man of science, learning and piety—whose head is blossoming for the grave, and whose heart *should* be dedicated to the solemn realities of eternity, stands before assembled thousands of his fellow beings, and *affirms* that such phenomena *are* *presented* *themselves*, and are continually presenting themselves for consideration. And what is more, less than five short years have sufficed to reduce this whole subject to one single point. All questions relating to these phenomena, but one, are definitely settled.—*Their existence is not denied!* The only question remaining is, are they produced by mundane, or by Spiritual cause?"

SPIRITUALISTS GOING ABROAD.

If any one doubts the fastness of the age in general and the progress of Spiritualism in particular, the fact that "the rappers" have converted millions of minds in the United States to a consciousness of immortality and Spirit-intercourse in five years, with the full force of "law, physic and divinity," against the *invisibles*, must be taken as evidence for a different conclusion. But when we add to this, that the "new religion," like other phases of faith, can afford to have *four* missionaries to go forth to preach the *glad* tidings, the evidence is conclusive. That such is the fact, the following from the New Era, bears witness:

"Dr. Hayden and lady, Miss Emma Jar, and D. D. Hume, call for London on the 25th of March. Mrs. Hayden is a superior medium; Miss Jar speaks in the trance before public audiences and in private circles, with the most pleasing effect, and Mr. Hume is one of the very best mediums for physical demonstrations the country affords. With such a trio, old England will be taken by storm."

We take it for granted that the Spirits are directors in this, since they evidently are the responsible parties, and without whom little good can result from the enterprise.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMS.

It is with pleasure we learn that efforts are being made by the friends of Spiritualism in this city, to secure the services of well-known mediums, and to circumstance them as to make it possible for them to give part of their time to the public and the cause, "without money and without price."

Besides which, preparations have been made and opportunities are now offered for the *development of mediums*, which statement must be glad tidings both to those wishing to be developed, and those seeking to multiply the necessary evidence, that conviction and conversion may come to all.

We have, personally, little sympathy with miracle-worker and wonder-monger, but the necessity for *mediums* is now so well attested, that the office of mediation is no longer an *isolated* conception in theology, but a *foundation* fact in science which, when understood and fully explained, may go far toward the development of a grand and comprehensive philosophy, which will alike harmonize the mission of Jesus and the providence of events.—Were it of any avail to regret, we might remind the reader that, as yet, next to nothing has been done for the classification and explanation of the differing phases of mediumistic powers, and as a consequence, there is not only *credulity* connected with Spiritualism, but a temptation to imposture and humbug, from a greedy desire for manifestations.

The multiplication of facts here, as elsewhere, however, will force classification on the mind, and call system into being, so that for the present we need but "learn to labor and to wait." The following letter will in this connection be welcome and suggestive of information to many, as it points out the way by which mediums may be multiplied and good accomplished:

SPIRITUALISM.—Dear Sir: The undersigned takes this method to acquaint you of an undertaking he has recently commenced, with the approval and assistance of the Spirits, for the advancement and furtherance of the Heavenly Truths, which the phenomena known as Spiritualism is giving to the world.

One year ago this date, I was moved and directed by the Spirits, to commence an undertaking which at that time was looked upon as full of visionary thought and a chaotic delusion, and predictions were made that but a few weeks would pass when the bubble would explode, and the undertaking would end to the discredit of all. The result has proved to the contrary, and shown that Spirit-prophecies are superior to the mortals. The Spirits' prediction have proved correct, and the result of that so-called visionary idea, is now in successful operation, and thousands have through that channel been brought into the belief of Spiritual communication.

The Society's rooms are thronged daily with searchers after truth, and the Journal from a circulation of a few copies has now increased to hundreds.

An impetus was given to Spiritualism from that date, which has spread during the year with a rapidity that will defy all comparison with any new belief since the mediumship of Christ.

In leaving and surrendering up the undertaking from individual management to a corporate organization, I, in announcing the fact through the Journal, made use of the following words, given to me through my powers as a medium and which at the time I could not comprehend, "We have but soon to enter upon a wider and more extensive field of operation."

That field is the development of Media through the powers vested in my family and myself, numbering six persons, all Mediums, who are now prepared to form Circles for the development of Mediums for Spiritual Communication.

Rooms will be thrown open at my residence for the reception of visitors who seek to investigate the wonders of modern Spiritualism.

J. F. VANEY, No. 101 Fourth Avenue, Between 11th and 12th sts.

New York, March 1st, '55.

As we have never seen the manifestations in Mr. Whitney's family, the following voluntary testimony may interest the reader:

"Mr. J. F. Whitney has opened rooms for the development of Mediums at 101 4th Avenue. From developments we have witnessed in Mr. W. V. family in the past, we are convinced he and his family are enabled by Spirit-intercourse, to assist in the development of those who are partial Mediums. There are Mediums in this city who can testify to the beneficial effects they have derived from these Circles."

SIR E. LYTON BULWER.

It seems to be the *fate* of greatness to be misrepresented, for as soon as a person gets to be of any importance in the world of opinion, he or she is made to say things which not only make issues with the *consistency* of the man or woman, but often the *sanity* of the mind. Few have had more of this "hither and yon" than the gentleman whose name heads this notice.

It may be, however, as Joseph Surface says, "this is the *bad side of a good reputation*," for if a person enjoys a reputation for liberality and progress, he soon gets to be with a certain class in favor of all kinds of *isms* prominent in the age.—Thus we have heard or seen it in print, that Sir E. Lyton Bulwer was a phrenologist, a mesmerist, a hydropathist, and last, though not least, a Spiritualist, but on what evidence we know not, except in the case of "water cure." Here we have his testimony and experience, which saves the necessity of conjecture and precludes the possibility of mistake or misrepresentation. We do not know that Mr. Bulwer does not believe in each and all of these reforms, but common prudence, as well as honesty, would suggest the propriety of being *sure* before the assertion was made.

We take part of this to ourself, for in a lecture not many months since, we had the misfortune to repeat the substance of the following, on the authority of "the papers":

"I have closed my career as a writer of fiction. I am gloomy and unhappy. I have expended the powers of life, chasing pleasure where it is not to be found."

Whatever *presumptive* evidence we may have had in mind, to justify a use of such an *improbable* statement, is neither here nor there, since Mr. Bulwer has given the correction in a *flat* denial:

Sir: In the Critic of Dec. 15, I read that a New York paper states, that Bulwer, the novelist, in a letter to a gentleman at Boston, says: "I have closed my career as a writer of fiction—I am gloomy and unhappy. I have expended the powers of life, chasing pleasure where it is not to be found." Assuming "Bulwer, the novelist," to be myself, I beg to state that I know no gentleman in Boston to whom I should write upon any matter concerning myself—that I never wrote anything of the sort to any one—and that the whole statement is a complete fabrication.

We hope this correction will have the proper effect and teach caution to all in receiving random and second-hand statements from the press or pulpit, and quicken the consciences of those whose party spirit is so active, that they can not allow men to define their *position*, before they are claimed as one "of the household of faith."

(For the Christian Spiritualist.)

FALSE MEDIUMS—EVIL SPIRITS—GOV. TALLMADGE'S BOOKS, &c.

Those who have thoroughly examined the modern Spiritual manifestations, have witnessed speaking mediums. The person is apparently thrown into a trance, and then an intelligence is uttered through the organ of such person, claiming to be from a Spirit.

As a general thing one can judge whether the medium is deceiving, or whether he is truly under some influence different from his own mind. I have accidentally met mediums for the first time, and they would be thrown into a trance, and some of my Spirit-friends speak through them. From their manner I could readily recognize them, without their announcing their names.

This class of mediumship, however, should be scrutinized with the greatest caution. It can easily be used as a cover for the grossest frauds and impostures. I can give you a case in point from my own experience.

A person known to many of your readers as a medium, has often spoken to audiences or small circles when he was really under Spiritual influence. That same person has many times pretended to be under such influence, and that distinguished Spirits were speaking through him, when it has been detected that the whole matter was a fraud on his part, and the speeches were wholly made by him. That person possesses great talent, has read much and speaks fluently, with great powers of imitation, so much so, that the most acute hearers have at times been deceived by him. Upon detecting the pretended Spirit of the grossest falsehood, at first I thought it was an evil Spirit which had control of the medium. I subsequently discovered that the evil Spirit was the medium himself. Your readers must judge of the baseness of a person who would be guilty of a fraud upon a subject so sacred.

All Spiritualists at first are apt to be credulous and superstitious, as were men in Old Testament times. They are apt to think that Spirits will not lie, and at all events, that no being in the form would be guilty of deceiving upon such subjects. After much reflection and experience, I have come to the conclusion that the following general rules would be well to guide us:

1. To suspect any medium who assumes that through him Spirits advise in regard to matters which, by *possibility*, interest himself.
2. Receive cautiously all advice relating to worldly matters, and never follow it unless our own judgment fully accords therewith.
3. Appeal directly to God to answer the conscience in all matters of doubt.

It is probably well to hear advice from Spirits or persons, but I believe each individual can commune directly with the Holy Spirit through his conscience, and by earnest desire or prayer will repel all evil Spirits and influences.

And from my experience, I believe the highest class of mediumship is that which comes through

the individual by *impression*, when he is fully conscious of his own acts.

Thus the writings of Gov. Tallmadge and Judge Edmonds, in my opinion, are of a higher class of inspiration than the communications generally given through mediums in their presence. It has often been remarked that the Introduction to Judge Edmonds' first volume was the best part of the book. Experience has shown that revelations, to be of any practical benefit to mankind must come through the human brain and be adapted to the development of mankind as they then exist. Hence Christ said that the world was not prepared for all truth in his day, but that after the human family had digested what he had given them, greater things would be revealed. It has taken over 1800 years to prepare the world to receive further, and it would seem but few even now have their lamps trimmed and are in readiness to receive the bridegroom of truth and righteousness.

I have not yet seen Judge Edmonds' second volume, but have had the pleasure of reading the manuscript in part, of the book soon to be issued by Gov. Tallmadge, and written by Charles Linton. In my judgment it is the greatest book published since the Revelations by John. It is not the writing or opinion of any mere Spirit, but its truths seem to have flowed from the highest class of inspiration.

In some parts is style its like the Proverbs. It has all their beauty and truth, and yet more logic apparently. There is a great desire for the book, and I predict that it will be read by every lawyer and educated man in America.

The Introduction by Gov. Tallmadge is written with great power, and would of itself make a book which would do much for the cause of humanity.

But to return to mediums. They should be developed with great caution. None should be encouraged to it except those of established character and integrity, and of great firmness. By their very development the door is opened to impression, and if they once yield to temptation, hordes of evil Spirits are attracted to them, who will frequently overpower them.

It is a great mistake to say there are no devils in the other world. There are millions; but are persons who have lived on earth, and while here were devils in the flesh. It may be asked what motive they have for continuing their rascality there? I ask what motive have those evil persons whom we daily meet, to continue their evil doing? An answer to either proposition answers both.

In my judgment, believers in Spiritual intercourse are multiplying as fast as society is prepared for it. The wisdom of the Divine Mind is manifest in this as in all other things. As human nature is now constituted, an instantaneous conversion of the world to Spiritualism would produce a revolutionary shock which might well be dreaded. But the work is moving on silently, discreetly, but firmly, and, in my judgment, will in due time, bring the whole human family into the bonds of Spiritual Christianity.

March, 1855.

CIRCUMSPECTIONS.

The Past! it is not wholly gone;
The absent still are near;
The loneliest heart not all forgot,
It still holds something dear.

The New is shadowed by the Old,
The great and wise and free
Are of one true heavenly fold,
Though wide their pastures be.

The Heavenly Shepherd gathers in
His own from near and far;
Their features all are known to Him,
Though strange to each they are.

The Old, in heart, contains the New,
As flowers from seeds unfold;
The loving, faithful, just and true,
Are of the Age of Gold.

Within my heart are gathered all,
As of one brotherhood;
Nor care what names the world may call
Upon the brave and good.

For names are but as idle weeds,
True hearts still feed the same;
Love consecrates the olden creeds,
And love consumes the same.

Humanity is one; and we
Are members of the race;
We have but one Father, King,
One Image bears each face.

In Spirit all are one who love,
And suffer for the right;
One heart within, on hope above,
One struggle through the night.

True Spirituality opens and enlarges both mind and heart. The pursuit of truth is the closest bond of union. The noble and generous affections which it calls forth quicken the human sympathies and expand their sphere. Selfishness, on the contrary, narrows and embitters. It antagonizes the former, as, in matter, the cohesive force antagonizes the expansive powers of heat. If we would know which of these principles is gaining ascendancy over us, the fraternal or sectarian, we have but to look within to discern whether our Spirits are ever encircling larger and *more* distant portions of the great human family, drawing them nearer and enfolding them closer in our heart of hearts; or, whether we are confining our tender charities to those who are called by our name, and embraced in the same limited and narrow sphere. Love has as many counterfeits and alloys as gold. The selfish instincts and clanish feelings may make men gregarious. Even brutes, the most savage and ignoble, love their own. Wolves hunt in packs, swine gorge in herds, and obscene birds gather in flocks to their unsavory banquet. If we cannot find it in our hearts to love those who differ from us, to esteem according to merit those who despise us, frankly and heartily to acknowledge both our own deficiencies and the virtues of those who oppose us, we may infer that charity has not yet accomplished her perfect work.

No fuller condemnation of the spirit that, in general, animates society and the churches, more especially as represented by the Press and the Clergy, need be sought than the treatment which Spiritualists have received at their hands. We have been regarded not as brothers, but as Pariahs, against whom the self-complacent divine might launch his anathemas, and the pert winking point the stalest jests. The men of the world and the men of the church, like Jew and Gentile, have united hand in hand to nail to a cross of shame all who bore the name. It was not enough that our own friends should reproach and wound us, not enough that the brutal and bigoted should mock and spit upon the manifestations; many who knew their value, or at least the innocence of their supporters, must lend their voices to the mob, and swell the outcry against them. The most liberal and influential of American Journals, as if to make ample amends for past delinquencies, now gives the fraternity the full benefit of its keenest criticisms. So also the most advanced of the clergy, Beecher and Bushnell, have no word of favor or encouragement for the investigators of Spiritualism; whilst Emerson and Parker, who have outstripped and left far behind even the "liberal clergy," externally, at least, are none the less avowed to the new faith.

Thus,—like the storm-tossed fleet of *Aeneas*, bearing in that was most valuable from the ruins of Troy—*numina divum et religio Danaum*, the sacred symbols of their faith and the seminal germs of a new empire,—Spiritualists have been beaten and buffeted on every side; though they alone sustain the inspired disclosures of the past, by showing their analogies in the present, and their fulfillment and complete unfolding in the great Future. And as the tempest that tried, and the hostile arms that withstood, the Trojan hero, but sifted and purged his band, and knit closer the hearts that remained; so the pressure and vituperation from without but drive from the ranks the cowardly and sinister, whilst they unite and bind by cords of living sympathy the true-hearted and the brave.

But we have still a more difficult task than to maintain our position impregnable against the world. This is easy; is in fact mostly done for us, by the nature of the ground we occupy, and by our allies from invisible spheres. But to love the hating; to be just to the unjust; to acknowledge with all candor and frankness whatever is good and beautiful in the lines that assail us; to seek not the spoil of our enemies, but to make their virtue our own; to win to truth and be won to truth;—will be found to be a more serious and protracted labor. The problem of all reformers is to retain all that is genuine and truthful in the old, and to incorporate it in the very heart and life of the new; and carry forth the whole to its ultimate and complete perfection. Catholicism still lingers because Protestantism fails to satisfy the inmost cravings of the human heart. Spiritualism advances less rapidly than it might, because many of its leaders know so little of the wants of the higher religious nature of man. Science may have its votaries, philosophy its admirers, but religion alone produces its confessors and martyrs. It is only when the moral nature is stirred to its inmost depths that man becomes a true hero. Love must kindle and devotion consecrate the heart, ere its fairest blossoms will unfold in faultless perfection.

But Spiritualists have one encouragement which is worth more than the array of mightiest names in their defence, or the flocking of multitudes to their standard. The wise have sometimes erred; folly and fanaticism have never wanted followers. Local causes may produce false currents and eddies, but the ocean obeys its attractive source. Individual minds may err, but Providence leads forth the race. The *tendency and drift of all modern thought and literature is to Spirituality*. The tides of the natural are setting towards the Spiritual World. The freest speculators, the most daring voyagers, who plow the seas of thought, venture upon the very verge that separates the two. Shelley and Keats, Coleridge and Wordsworth, are the hierophants of a New Era. The children of the Old World, were born heirs to the New. They sang inspired by the great Future now unfolding among men. The interior of their life now assumes its external. Not yet all fair and symmetrical; the rags of the old still alternate with the spangled robes of the new. Life and Death contend in every heart, and share the world between them.—He who has drunk most deeply from the inspired lays of these poets, imbibing not merely their language but their very Spirit and life, is prepared for the disclosures and developments of the present day. Even Milton and Dante, the great poetic lights of all Christendom, are, through imagination, and as it were by anticipation and prophecy, the poets of the invisible realms. All these are as the morning stars that sang together over the birth of a new world.

The greatest of living poets, Tennyson and Longfellow, belong also to the transitional era. The mind of the former, like a pure, aerial Spirit, broods over loveliest themes and folds finest thoughts, of sweetest touching grace, in softly fitting verse; whilst our own high cultured bard, like the summer moon above an olden ruin, re-clothes with softer hues the fading Past, and breathes a spirit o'er its mouldering piles; but both, touched by the Genius of the Age, pour forth in song strains that vibrate and thrill through each quickened Spiritual nature. It is needless to quote by way of illustration; every lover of the gentle Muse knows these passages by heart; every enlightened Spiritualist knows also whence such language comes and whither their music leads.

But poets are often far in advance of their time, even by whole generations and centuries; and the divinest inspiration, in its deep interior sense, spans the whole era and arch of time. Let us then turn to the most powerful of living prose writers; to Carlyle and Emerson, the Hercules and Mercury of a new mythology; or, perhaps, the Richard Coeur de Lion and nimble Saladin of the modern chivalry of thought; the former doing to death with his ponderous club, or strangling in his brawny arms, the monsters that prowl amid the ruins of the Old World; the latter severing with such dexterity the head from the shoulders of Puritan Orthodoxy, that it stands for awhile, like the traitor in the *Tul-ismen*, as if unconscious of the loss. Human and gigantic strength characterize the Scottish, a subtle wit and penetrating intellect the New England reformer;—both war against the crushing tyrannies that enslave the soul. Each, in his own way, speeds the car of progress. Their genius kindles, and their efforts fan, the flame that consumes the dead forms of the past. These men are unconscious mediums. They are wiser than they know. They will never fully understand the tendency and purpose of all their many labors till they view them from the farther shore, whither we are all fast drifting. Then they, and we too, shall find that they were truer Spiritualists than many who most loudly vaunt the name.

The Spiritual tendencies of the age are also manifest in the foremost of living preachers.—Beecher and Bushnell among the orthodox; Parker and several other New England Divines among the liberals, though differing widely in creed and profession, are still more or less open to the influx now descending from the heavens. Beecher believes in living inspiration, and Parker holds that it is permanent in the church, infusing into the pure and earnest in mind and heart.

Now it matters little what a man is outwardly and by profession. Men are to be grouped according to their genius. The unconscious is the true domain of life. Outwardly men are what circumstances and temporary interests have made them; inwardly more true to the thought of Him in whose image they are made. The mild and Christian Shelley professed Atheism with his lips, and heathen Oxford was shocked at his blasphemy.—So many now assail with bitter words the cause they unconsciously love. Men know not what Spirit they are of till brought into the state of their interiors.

There are, in fact, two churches throughout all Christendom, the inward and vital which struggles like an imprisoned Spirit in the old organizations; and the outer church of forms and creeds, that strives, like the dying body, to retain its panting guest. So Life looks forth from the old win-

dows of its crumbling tenement fast tottering to its final fall.

Thus the world becomes the broad field for the insemination of Spiritual truth, and faithful laborers are coming up from every walk of life. We have more helpers than we know. Many fight valiantly under the same great Commander who yet know not the colors of our new regiment. The brave and true, when once they know each other, are ever friends.

Could the great book of Divine Providence, as illustrated in history, be unfolded to our eyes, we should see the past, the present and the future but as one mighty stream, sweeping in majestic curves towards an unknown sea; yet through all its darkened course it feels the attraction of an unseen Power; and amid all its tossings and foamings it obeys the high behest of Him who onward rolls its waves and guides them from afar.

Man sees the links, God holds the mighty chain;
Man counts the sands, God's hand doth still sustain
The mighty Hierarchy of worlds and spheres,
Hymning their anthem from ancient years,
Of joys to man and glory unto Him
Who gave their orbs for evermore to swim
In heavenly spaces, rising still to light
Ineffable and glory infinite.

Peace, peace, my heart, the Spirit duly arise,
Thou, too, shalt yet be pure and meekly wise;
In the far Future golden days shall come,
The heart shall be the vestibule and home
Of joys that unto higher joys lead on,
Till Earth and Heaven for ever more are one.

S. E. B.

HOW ARE WE LIVING?

Would that the stoic age and philosophy were once more revived among us. The sublime requisites of character are those, which, as far as self is concerned, could stand unmoved at the breaking up of this wide universe. We apply this, of course, to the present condition of our intellectual and moral life.

All the intellect of the age is characterized by nothing save a thought of popularity; "the large wisdom looking before and after," enters no more into our mental organization—strings no more the lyre with a song of true religion, nor reverberates in the enchanting cadence of the orator's mighty spell. Men are no more taught to be indifferent to the glory which their inspiration excites; on the contrary, they rest with satisfaction on the momentary enthusiasm it creates, rather than upon the value intrinsically, of their creation. What shall renew the philosophic Spirit of old days?—What shall set up anew the idols which Plato and Socrates erected, amid the dreary wastes of our intellectual being?

"The court, the camp, the church, the vessel and the mart," we range—all the proud provinces of the earth are ravaged in search for something that may gratify the cravings of the Spirit, and not one look inward upon the sorrowing Angel of our interior life rewards our aspirations or satisfies our desires.

It is thus in Poetry; the true *ecats* or seer, seizes eagerly upon everything containing the essence of popularity, and is content to have the echo of his song die away with that popularity, rather than echo in the ear of the future,—

"As the sounds, when hours are numbered,
Lingers in the hollow bell."

It is thus with the teacher; feeble pretences to virtue are excited, and not a single reward adequate to a display of that virtue is provided or offered. It is thus with the Spirit of accumulation; a premium for getting rich most rapidly is the only thing offered by the generation as a bequest of Life. We occupy this unfortunate position in a political sense; the idea of patriotism is kindled too often by the gleam of gold, rather than by the mind and Spirit which fill the world with light.

As the earth was startled of old, by what the Tuscan exponent called the *Prodigia*, so has the modern era been roused by visible appearances of God's beneficence to us. This, for want of better nomenclature we have called "Spiritual intercourse," and it is generating that Spirit of philosophy which we have declared wanting, and which comes as the greatest of heavenly benedictions amid the surge and sway of moving things. It is the gentle calm amid a sea of passion, proving a supremacy in the most irreconcilable adversities, and grandly and triumphantly bearing us onward in the storms of life.

This is a triumph, and a very great one, and should it appear fabulous and visionary, we would ask those to produce something that will work a better result.

The Rev. Mr. Hayden, of Maine, is delivering a course of lectures here upon the Spiritual Philosophy. He contemplates the subject in a very elevated aspect, and explains his views with great ingenuity and felicity. The affinity of Spirit with form he illustrated in a very rational and profound manner, and his thoughts revived the memory of a rhyme written years ago, by your correspondent, which I will quote:

"Life and Death! a thin partition
All thy mysteries divide;
For in shadow walks the Spirit,
With the mortal side by side."

This course, I am confident, will awaken a new feeling in our community with regard to the truth, attraction and rationality of Spirit-demonstration and doctrine. A memory sufficiently tenacious to grasp and maintain the Spirit of these lectures, might furnish your readers with food for deep contemplation, and enrich the recesses of their nature with a flood of pure suggestiveness. A grand symbolical image was introduced in the first discourse, which many times since has intruded itself upon the memory. "The material form and Spirit," he said, "were blended as the unseen air takes up the sand of the desert and clothes itself with its substance. So also with the waters of the deep, raised by the airy structure of the heavens, like a tower leading to the celestial world."

(For the Christian Spiritualist.)

